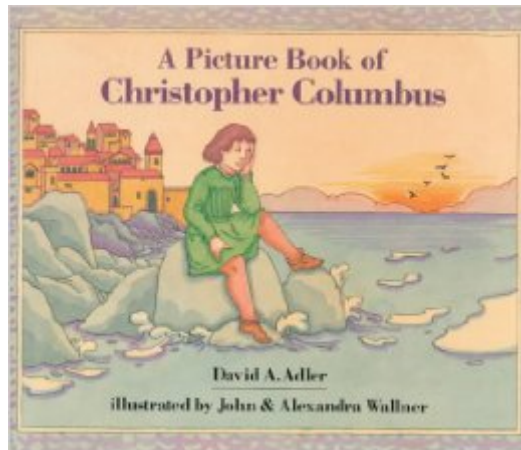


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A Picture Book Of Christopher Columbus (Picture Book Biographies) (Picture Book Biography)



Synopsis

A brief account of the life and accomplishments of Christopher Columbus.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 710L (What's this?)

Series: Picture Book Biographies

Paperback: 30 pages

Publisher: Holiday House; Reprint edition (March 1, 1992)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 082340949X

ISBN-13: 978-0823409495

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 0.2 x 7.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #46,036 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #12 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Holocaust #19 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Exploration & Discovery #124 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Historical

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

Customer Reviews

This is an interesting book with nice artwork that is a bit dry. I've included the first three paragraphs for your perusal so you can get the gist of the book's style. Christopher Columbus was born in 1451 in Genoa, Italy. His parents were Susanna and Domenico Colombo. Domenico was a master weaver. Susanna was the daughter of a weaver. Genoa is at the shore of the Ligurian Sea, part of the Mediterranean. When Christopher and others looked out over the water, they saw no end to it. Christopher was a tall boy with a thin face and freckles. He worked in his father's shop, but he dreamed of going to sea. While the downside of the book is its stark prose and a lack of smooth transitions in places, on the plus side it has nice artwork and covers many details that other little kid books don't. For example, it talks about how important Christopher's brother, Bartholomew, was when it came for inquiring after funds for the expedition. He was the one who spoke to the Kings and Queens of England and France - not Christopher. In addition, the author discusses how Christopher was once shipwrecked, and how he ran a shop with Bartholomew that provided books

and maps for navigators. In a general sense, this book builds a picture of Christopher Columbus as a man who didn't give up when faced with delays and difficulties. After reading and discussing the book, children should be left with the impression that Christopher's trip wasn't a sudden and whimsical affair and that he acquired years of sailing experience and struggled through many setbacks before being able to begin his great adventure. I, personally, like the emphasis on Columbus' struggle as it demonstrates that persistence works.

The story presented here is not surprising, as it recounts the traditional, accepted tale of Columbus' journey. It focuses on Columbus as a person, his desires, struggles, and eventual "success." Unfortunately, this kind of a focus is very limiting. The bias embedded in the book treats the indigenous people as mute, subservient, nameless creatures who are happy to invite the invaders onto their land. Adler even relegates them to the status of mere goods saying something along the lines of, "On his journey back to Spain, Columbus brought back with him pineapples, spices, and a few Indians." Those Indians, if you look at Columbus' own words, were slaves: "Thursday, October 11, 1492 It appears to me, that the people are ingenious, and would be good servants and I am of opinion that they would very readily become Christians, as they appear to have no religion. They very quickly learn such words as are spoken to them. If it please our Lord, I intend at my return to carry home six of them to your Highnesses, that they may learn our language." "October 14, 1492...these people are very unskilled in arms. Your Highnesses will see this for yourselves when I bring you the seven that I have taken. After they learn our languages I shall return them, unless Your Highnesses order that the entire population be taken to Castille, or held captive here. With 50 men you could subject everyone and make them do what you wished" Adler's story also fails to mention that Columbus himself was responsible for a tribute system that resulted in the death and mutilation of thousands of Taino.

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